FILEFLO / Aviation Compliance

ENFORCEMENT TEARDOWN

What the FAA actually asked for.

Six Part 135 enforcement actions since March 2024, the exact record that failed in each one, and how long each condition ran before it was found. Every case is built from the FAA's own announcements.

6	$1.16M	6
ACTIONS EXAMINED	IN PROPOSED CIVIL PENALTIES	FAA ANNOUNCEMENTS, LINKED BELOW

Every case built from the FAA's own announcements at faa.gov/newsroom · www.getfileflo.com/resources/faa-part-135-enforcement-teardown

THE PREMISE

The FAA reads the record.

Every case here turns on the operator’s own records. The agency asked for a record, and the record did not support the flights that had already happened.

For each case, the teardown names the specific record that failed, and then the number that matters most: how long the condition ran before anybody found it.

32 flights. 83 flights. 315 flights. 170 flights. Five years.

The exposure grows with the interval between a lapse and the moment someone finds it. The useful question for any operator is how short that interval can be made.

> **HOW TO READ THIS TEARDOWN**
> Each case gives the record that failed, how long it ran and one question to ask about your own operation. The lessons hold whatever system you keep your records in. The section after the cases shows where FileFlo works on the same records.

The scorecard

Six cases, the record that failed in each, and how long it ran.

OPERATOR	THE RECORD THAT FAILED	RAN FOR	KIND OF RECORD
Southern Airways	SIC competency check and required testing	32 flights	Crew qualification
Private Jets	PIC, SIC and type testing in 12 months	Several flights	Crew qualification
StarFlite	Training records, falsified by management	5 years	Crew qualification
Brazos Valley	AD inspection method and mechanic training	83 flights	Maintenance execution
Gem Air	Engine overhaul and inspection past due	315 flights	Component limits
Planet Nine	Flight plans, permits, manual adherence	21 filings	Operational practice

WHAT THE PATTERN SAYS

Three of the six turn on crew qualification currency. Half the enforcement actions came down to whether a specific person was current, in a specific seat, on a specific date, and whether anyone checked before the trip went. That is the failure mode that runs longest, because nothing about it is visible. An overdue engine eventually gets noticed. A gear failure announces itself. An expired competency check produces no symptom at all, and the exposure compounds one leg at a time until someone reads the file.

The six cases

CASE 01 / CREW QUALIFICATION

Southern Airways Express

Palm Beach, FL · Announced March 2024 · $280,000 proposed civil penalty

Three Cessna Caravans flew 32 commercial flights between Washington Dulles and Morgantown, West Virginia with a co-pilot who had not passed recent written or oral tests, or a competency check. The FAA alleged the operation was careless or reckless and endangered life and property.

THE RECORD THAT FAILED

Second-in-command qualification. Specifically the written test, the oral test, and the competency check, each of which has to fall inside a defined lookback from the date of the flight.

32 commercial flights October 1 to 12, 2022.

ASK ABOUT YOUR OWN OPERATION

For every crewmember on next week's schedule, what is the date of their last competency check, and who verified it before the trip was assigned?

CASE 02 / MAINTENANCE EXECUTION

Brazos Valley Air Charter

Tulsa, OK · Announced January 2025 · $202,450 proposed civil penalty

A mechanic inspected a Piaggio P180 main landing gear component for cracks without using the method the Airworthiness Directive specified. He had not been trained in that method and had not been given the required tools and equipment. The aircraft then flew roughly 83 flights over five months. On the last one, the right main landing gear failed on landing at Cincinnati Municipal / Lunken, causing damage to the aircraft.

THE RECORDS THAT FAILED

Two. The AD-mandated inspection, performed by a method other than the one the Airworthiness Directive specified. And the mechanic’s own training and equipment qualification for the task he signed for.

83 flights, five months October 11, 2022 to March 17, 2023. It ended when the gear failed on landing, not in an audit.

ASK ABOUT YOUR OWN OPERATION

When someone signs off an AD-mandated inspection, where is the record showing they were trained and equipped for that specific method?

CASE 03 / COMPONENT LIMITS

Gem Air

Salmon, ID · Announced May 2024 · $239,000 proposed civil penalty

A Cessna Caravan flew 315 flights with a required engine overhaul overdue. A Cessna T206 flew with an overdue engine exhaust inspection. A Britten-Norman BN-2A departed Boise for Salmon without enough fuel to complete the flight and made an emergency landing after the right engine stopped.

THE RECORD THAT FAILED

Component time tracking. The overhaul came due, and the airplane kept being dispatched against it for half a year.

315 flights May 22 to November 28, 2022. Six months on one airframe.

ASK ABOUT YOUR OWN OPERATION

What tells you a component is approaching its limit, and does that signal reach the person building the schedule, or only the person doing the maintenance?

CASE 04 / DOCUMENT TO OPERATION DRIFT

Planet Nine Private Air

Van Nuys, CA · Announced May 2026 · $336,000 proposed civil penalty

The FAA alleges the company filed 21 inaccurate international flight plans describing passenger charter flights as general aviation, failed to obtain overflight or landing permits, and failed to follow its own Oceanic and International Procedures Manual.

THE RECORD THAT FAILED

The filed flight plan and the permits. And note the third allegation, because it is the one that should get an operator’s attention: the manual was not missing. It existed, it was approved, and the operation did not follow it. The FAA charged the distance between the document and the practice.

21 flight plans The proposed penalty works out to roughly $16,000 for each flight plan.

ASK ABOUT YOUR OWN OPERATION

Where could your manual and your daily practice drift apart, and who checks that they match?

CASE 05 / CREW QUALIFICATION

Private Jets, Inc.

Bethany, OK · Announced June 2026 · $104,000 proposed civil penalty

The FAA alleges an employee piloted several flights in April 2025 without having completed the testing required to serve as pilot in command, as second in command, or in the aircraft type operated, within the preceding twelve months.

THE RECORD THAT FAILED

Pilot qualification currency, evaluated three ways at once: by seat, by aircraft type, and against a rolling twelve-month lookback from the date of each flight.

Several flights April 2025. Announced June 2026.

ASK ABOUT YOUR OWN OPERATION

Your answer has to be right per person, per seat, and per type. Can you produce all three for a given date without opening a folder?

CASE 06 / FALSIFICATION

StarFlite Aviation

Houston, TX · Announced February 2026 · Certificate revoked by emergency order

The FAA alleges management personnel made false entries in the training records of at least ten pilots, including the chief pilot, showing check rides and competency checks in various aircraft that never took place. The company used unqualified pilots on at least 170 flights. The agency also found it lacked the qualified management personnel required to run the operation.

THE RECORD THAT FAILED

The training record itself, falsified at the management level. And the management personnel requirement, a condition of holding the certificate rather than a file.

Five years November 2019 to November 2024. At least 170 flights. Certificate revoked by emergency order; the order can be appealed to the NTSB.

ASK ABOUT YOUR OWN OPERATION

Who can create or edit a training record in your shop, and is there any independent trace that the event actually happened?

The self-check

Pick a flight you ran ninety days ago. Answer these without opening a filing cabinet or calling anyone.

1. Who occupied each seat, and was each of them current for that seat and that type on that date?
2. Was the aircraft inside every inspection, AD, and component limit that day?
3. Who released the trip, and are they listed in your manual as authorized to exercise operational control?
4. Does the record proving all of the above still exist, and does it carry a date and a signature?

If any answer required a phone call to one specific person, that person is your compliance system. That works right up until they are on vacation, or the schedule moves at 0500, or the request arrives about a flight from eighteen months ago.

Where FileFlo works on these records

Three of the six cases turn on crew qualification: whether a specific person was current, in a specific seat, on a specific date. That is the record FileFlo works on, with the rule behind every answer.

- Each pilot’s competency check, instrument proficiency check, line check, recurrent training and medical computed from your records, dated from the event itself, and cited to the rule.
- Each check read from FAA Form 8410-3 and matched to your fleet types and your check airman roster. A self-signed or out-of-fleet check is refused, with the reason.
- A check in its grace month is never shown as cleared. A date FileFlo cannot read is refused as unknown, and a date your team enters is recorded as your input.
- Each planned trip reviewed for every crew member and the aircraft and returned cleared or blocked, each block with the missing record, its holder and its expiry. The Part 111 pilot records review holds a release until your Director of Operations or Chief Pilot closes it.
- OpSpecs, manuals and management personnel records on file with their status, and an audit packet with an inspector link limited to one aircraft or one crew.

FileFlo reports readiness. Your Director of Operations makes the operational decision.

Get the full teardown

To see the records work on a demonstration operator, or to begin with your own crew records, start below.

Get the Crew Records Setup | **See how FileFlo works**

The Audit-Ready Crew Records Setup is $1,500 once and includes 30 days of FileFlo. Then $150 per aircraft per month for 1 to 15 aircraft, if you continue; nothing is charged if you do not. 16 or more aircraft, air medical and fractional operations are priced by written quote. Request a quote.

FileFlo is private software. It is not the FAA, it is not approved by the FAA, and no agency referred you here.

SOURCES, ALL FROM THE FAA'S OWN ANNOUNCEMENTS

- FAA: $280,000 penalty against Southern Airways Express
- FAA: $202,450 civil penalty against Brazos Valley Air Charter
- FAA: $239,000 civil penalty against Idaho-based Gem Air
- FAA: $336,000 fine against Planet Nine Private Air
- FAA: $104,000 fine against Private Jets, Inc.
- FAA: emergency order to revoke StarFlite Aviation certificate

All published at faa.gov/newsroom. Allegations described here are as stated by the FAA. The five civil penalties are proposed, and each operator has the right to respond. StarFlite's certificate was revoked by emergency order, which can be appealed to the NTSB.